



## LEGISLATIVE IMPACT STATEMENT

### H.B. 1085 REDUCE DAILY CREEL LIMIT FOR TRIPLETAIL FISH FROM 5 TO 2 PER PERSON

**DNR Position:** DNR supports this legislation.

#### Description of Current Law

O.C.G.A. 27-4-130.1 establishes open seasons, creel and possession limits, and minimum size limits for certain finfish species including the tripletail (*Lobotes surinamensis*).: Currently the tripletail season is open year round with a minimum size of 18 inches total length and a maximum creel and possession limit of five fish.

#### Description of Proposed Change:

H.B. 1085 will reduce the maximum creel and possession limit to two fish.

#### Overall Impact:

The tripletail is targeted by recreational anglers all along the Georgia coast, but is especially popular with those in the Brunswick-Golden Isles area. Each year, large numbers of tripletail congregate in the shallow waters of the Atlantic Ocean just eastward of Jekyll Island. The practice of sight fishing for the free-swimming tripletail is growing in popularity with guided and unguided anglers alike. Other anglers still employ the traditional approach of fishing for tripletail behind structures such as channel markers and pilings.

The current creel limit of five fish per person per day is considered by many guides and anglers to be too liberal, particularly since scientists know very little about the basic biology and life history of the tripletail and even less about its population trends. Given the uncertainties associated with management of this species, a reduction in the creel limit is deemed to be risk-averse and proactive conservation.

#### Financial Impact:

There will be no adverse financial impacts from this legislation either to the Department or to the fishing community. By contrast, long-term positive financial impacts in the form of angler expenditures for goods and services will be derived from a stable, self-sustaining tripletail population that provides consistent fishing opportunities.

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